Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction of present Research

1.1 Adolescence

1.1.1 Meaning

1.1.2 Characteristics of Adolescence Period

1.1.3 Stages of Adolescence

1.1.4 Adolescents and religion

1.2 Religion

1.2.1 Religions in India

1.2.2 Religion as cultural factors

1.3 Gender

1.4. Home environment

1.4.1 Meaning

1.4.2 The role of home or family in child development

1.4.3 Psychosocial Competence of Adolescents and Home environment
1.5 Self-disclosure

1.5.1 Types of disclosure-

1.5.2 Characteristics of Self Disclosure

1.5.3 Facets of self-disclosure

1.5.4 Functions of Self Disclosure

1.5.5 Positive-Negative Sides of Self Disclosure

1.5.6 Determinants of self-disclosure

1.5.7 Consequences of self-disclosure

1.5.8 Disclosure and Health

1.6 Ego-strength

1.6.1 Definition of Ego-strength

1.6.2 Erik Erikson’s Approach

1.6.3 Erikson’s eight stage theory of development
Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction of present Research

Adolescence stage becomes more dramatic because after the period of relatively slow growth in childhood, there is sudden period of growth spurt accompanied by rapid and uneven physical and mental development. According to Bhardwaj and Kaushik (1985) adolescence is a period of rapid growth and development. During this period the adolescent experience socio-psychological changes. These changes result in different types of problems and crises. These adolescents get social and intellectual experiences from their home, school, and community and from these settings they acquire and develop the emotions, skills, attitudes and attachments which characterize them as individuals and shape their choice and performance of adult roles (Morrison and McIntyre, 1973). During adolescence most of the social influences upon individual can be categorized as being associated with home as in the early years the family is the most potent source of influence. It is well known fact that most of those who become successful in life have come from homes where parental attitude towards them is favourable and where a wholesome relationship existing between parents and children produces happy and friendly children who are constructive and affectionate members of the group.

Other than home adolescents get influences from many different directions and it is difficult to keep them away from such influences. As a result importance of self-disclosure increases manifold as voluntary disclosure from adolescent’s enable
parents to know more about them and also helps in building an atmosphere of trust and honesty towards each other which will be facilitate their overall development. Self-disclosure also has been known to be a potent tool for facilitating friendship, penitence, confidentiality, and conciliation (Elegbeleye, 2008). The dimensions of self-disclosure which are breadth and depth shape what is disclosed and determines to whom information is disclosed.

Apart from home environment and self-disclosure several studies have report the ego-Strength affecting adolescents’ adaptation. Ego-strength is the individual's capacity to hold on to his own identity despite distress, turmoil and conflict between opposing internal forces as well as the demands of reality (Brown et al., 1979).

This aforementioned variable such as home environment, self-disclosure and ego-strength found to be influencing with many personal, social, psychological factors. As several decades of social scientific studies have shown that religion is often a factor in the lives of adolescents, influencing their attitudes and behaviors in ways that are commonly viewed as positive and constructive (Smith, 2003). The present study made its effort to investigate adolescents’ home environment, self-disclosure and ego strength in respect of their religious and gender difference. These considered variables are described under following as-

- Adolescents
- Religion
- Gender
- Home environment
- Self-disclosure
- Ego-strength
1.1. Adolescence

1.1.1 Meaning

Life is composed of three stages childhood, adolescence and old age. CHILDHOOD means promises to keep in future, ADOLESCENCE, determination in present and OLD AGE, memories of the past. Future depends on present and present is based on past. Each stage has its own characteristics, objectives and importance. If childhood is considered as golden period then adolescence is referred as precious. It acts as a bridge between childhood and old age.

It attracts the researcher or even a layman to study more and more about them, especially in the field of Social Sciences, like Sociology, Psychology and Home Science etc.

As children grow from year to year, they develop greater complexity in social behaviour; greater skills in getting along with people and self-control. Thus the adolescence years are a time of great increase in social development. During adolescence period an individual acquires certain beliefs, values and social skills, which become more or less a part of personality and influence his behaviour throughout the life. It is a time of great increase in independence, training, motivation and social mobilization, so during the adolescence period family attitudes and behaviour become matters of great concern to the developing boys or girls.

The word ‘adolescent’ is derived from the Latin verb ‘adolescere’ meaning ‘to grow’ or ‘to go to maturity’. In other words the child as a whole undergoes a
complex series of changes in the various aspects of growth and development, namely physical, social, emotional and moral.

“Adolescence is the age of great ideals and the beginning of theories as well as the time of simple present adaptation to reality”.

- *Piaget, J.*

“Adolescence is that span of years during which boys and girls move from childhood to adulthood mentally, emotionally, socially and physically”.

- *Jersild, A.T.*

“Adolescence is a distinctive stage in personality development precipitated by significant changes in the bio-social status of the child”.

- *Ausubel D. P., 1954*

“Adolescence is the bridge between childhood and adulthood. It is a time of rapid development of growing to sexual maturity, discovering one’s real self, defining personal values, and finding one’s vocational and social direction. It is also a time of testing, of pushing against one’s capacities and the limitations as posed by adults.”

- *Ambron, 1975*

**1.1.2 Characteristics of Adolescence Period**

Adolescence period is considered as a period of transition, storm and stress, problems age, change, unrealism, a time of search for identity, lack of stability and adjustment, need for self-support and a period of hero worship. At this stage an adolescent shows
interest in predictable occupation, which is reasonably accurate of one’s own abilities, and interests.

### 1.1.3 Stages of Adolescence

Hurlock. E.B. (1964) lists the entire range/span of adolescence as follows:

- **Pre-Adolescence**
  
  -->
  11-13 yrs (Girls) : 13-15 yrs. (Boys)

- **Early-Adolescence**
  
  -->
  13-15 yrs (Girls) : 15-17 yrs. (Boys)

- **Middle-Adolescence**
  
  -->
  15-18 yrs (Girls) : 17-19 yrs. (Boys)

- **Late-Adolescence**
  
  -->
  18-21 yrs (Girls) : 19-21 yrs. (Boys)

### Late Adolescence:

W.H.O. (1984) identified people in the 15 to 24 age group as youth. The term youth refers to mean those who “after adolescence and before adulthood entered in a future stage of development”. According to this aforementioned the youth can be fixed roughly from 18 to mid or late 20s or perhaps even under 30. Youth has been recognized as an important resource that is full of energy, zeal, enthusiasm and drive. Physically, mentally and spiritually this group is one, which is approaching near perfection.

### 1.1.4 Adolescents and religion

Adolescence begins in biology and ends in culture. According to Pedersen (1990), “culture” includes “ethnographic variables such as ethnicity, nationality, religion, and languages, as well as demographic variables such as age, gender, and place of
residence, status variables such as social, economic, and educational factors, and affiliations”. In almost every culture, beliefs and practices of a religious nature are prominent in providing support and guidance that can assist in the maintenance and enrichment of the overall functioning of an individual.

1.2 Religion

Religion is an organized collection of belief systems, cultural systems, and world views that relate humanity to spirituality and, sometimes, to moral values. Many religions have narratives, symbols, traditions and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life or to explain the origin of life or the Universe. From their ideas about the cosmos and human nature, they tend to derive morality, ethics, religious laws or a preferred lifestyle. According to some estimates, there are roughly 4,200 religions in the world.

Many religions may have organized behaviors, clergy, a definition of what constitutes adherence or membership, holy places, and scriptures. The practice of a religion may also include rituals, sermons, commemoration or veneration of a deity, gods or goddesses, sacrifices, festivals, feasts, trance, initiations, funerary services, matrimonial services, meditation, prayer, music, art, dance, public service or other aspects of human culture. Religions may also contain mythology.

1.2.1 Religions in India

India known as the land of spirituality and philosophy was the birthplace of some religions, which even exist today in the world.
The most dominant religion in India today is Hinduism. About 80% of Indians are Hindus. Hinduism is a colorful religion with a vast gallery of Gods and Goddesses. Hinduism is one of the ancient religions in the world. It is supposed to have developed about 5000 years ago. Later on in ancient period other religions developed in India.

Around 500 BC two other religions developed in India, namely, Buddhism and Jainism. Today only about 0.5% of Indians are Jains and about 0.7% are Buddhist. In ancient times Jainism and specially Buddhism were very popular in India. Indians who accepted Buddhist philosophy spread it not only within the Indian sub-continent but also to kingdoms east and south of India.

These three ancient religions, Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, are seen as the molders of the India philosophy. In 'modern' period new religions were also established in India. One comparatively new religion in India is Sikhism and it was established in the 15th century. About 2% of Indians are Sikhs. Along with the religions that developed in India, there are followers of non-Indian religions. The largest non-Indian religion is Islam. They are about 12% of India's population. Christians are more than 2% of India's population. There are also Zoroastrians who even though make less than 0.01% of India's population, are known around India. There are also a few thousand Jews in India. Judaism and Christianity might have arrived in India before they arrived in Europe.

1.2.1 Religion as cultural factors

According to Pedersen (1990), “culture” includes “ethnographic variables such as ethnicity, nationality, religion, and languages, as well as demographic variables such as age, gender, and place of residence, status variables such as social, economic, and
educational factors, and affiliations”. In almost every culture, beliefs and practices of a religious nature are prominent in providing support and guidance that can assist in the maintenance and enrichment of the overall functioning of an individual, as in the areas of educational achievement and social competence.

In large part, specific religious beliefs are preserved through cultural transmission, since they have continuum only through being passed on to future generations, the individual members of which must, in turn, embrace those transmitted beliefs and practices as their own. This process is called internalization. According to Ryan, Rigby, and King (1993), internalization refers to ‘the process through which an individual transforms a formerly externally prescribed regulation or value into an internal one’.

Internalization is most evident in the case of religious beliefs and practices. However, religious beliefs can be rigidly and unreflectively adopted or they can, in contrast, be flexible, leaving one open to the consideration and assimilation of new ideas.

➢ Socialization process:

Research on transmission of values would naturally begin with an exact conception of what is being transmitted, which would range from religious values to common orientations about life. In the family, through a process of socialization, parents pass these down to their offspring. In order to illuminate this process that occurs in a familial context,

Taylor, Clayton, and Rowley (2004) present a definition:
Socialization is the process by which parents shape a child’s behaviors, attitudes, and social skills so that the child will be able to function as a member of society. According to this definition, the socialization of children into a system of values and beliefs about self and society is primarily molded by parents. In association with value transmission, Glass, Bengtson and Dunham (1986) have concluded that the socialization acquired from the parents also encompasses “successful intergenerational transmission of class, race, religious affiliation, marital status, and other prominent social statuses that structure life experience and mold social attitudes.” These studies insinuate that these socialization processes affect a child’s formation of a world view, but more importantly, also funnel the child into broader communities which also help preserve the child’s religious beliefs and practices.

➢ Value transmission through socialization process:

In regard to value socialization in the family, Whitbeck & Gecas (1988) found four factors or conditions to be particularly important to consider in assessing the transmission of values between parents and children:

a) The nature and kinds of values under consideration;

b) The perceptions and attributions formed by children regarding values of their parents;

c) The children’s age; and

d) The quality of interactions between parent and child. Value socialization in the bounds of parent-child relations may vary depending on these key components.
For example, Furstenberg (1974) noticed that the perception of the parents’ values by the child is a significant factor in the transmission of values. He detailed that the more clearly children comprehended educational goals, the more probability there would be for the children to share them with their parents.

Another important point to take into account in value socialization would be the child’s age, because age is associated with cognitive development. During the formation of values, cognitive development operates both to set lower limits for expected internalization to occur and to discern which types of values can best be socialized at different development stages. Values also become more stable in the system of beliefs while the children mature. Furthermore, socialization outcomes depend on the quality of relations between the parent and child, in other words, on what takes place between parent and child. To the degree that the child identifies with the parent, the chance of internalizing the parent’s values would be increased for the child (Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988).

**Religious socialization:**

Religious socialization entails the process by which a person learns and internalizes behaviors, attitudes, and values within the framework of a religious system of beliefs and practices (Brown & Gary, 1991). Regnerus (2000) also defines that religious socialization is a process that often operates apart from particular belief systems and organizational affiliations, and constitutes a form of social assimilation that has the effect of reinforcing values particularly beneficial to educational achievement and goal-setting. In order to illuminate his definition, he tested a multilevel model of involvement in church activities as providing integration and motivation toward schooling success among U.S. public high school sophomores in urban areas. He found
out that respondents’ participation in church activities is related to heightened educational expectations, and that these more eagerly religious students score higher on standardized math and reading tests.

In this religious socialization process, research has focused on three agents: the family (Greeley & Rossi, 1966), the church, and peers (Cornwall, 1988). They found that the family, more particularly, parents are the primary agents of religious socialization or transmission, while peers and the religious associations are secondary institutions.

According to Hart’s study (1990) on the impact of religious socialization in the family, compared with other contexts in which socialization occurs, the home context was the most influential milieu that contributed to the teenager’s religious socialization among the other contexts including the peer group, school, religious organization such as church, and mass media. In the study by Hunsberger and Brown (1984) which elucidated the effects of various sources of religious influence during childhood, participants in the study reported that their “home experience” has the strongest influence on their religious development.

This study addressed the significance of the home environment, especially parental, more particularly, maternal influence, in affecting the later religious orientation (whether constructively or destructively), at least when their children become college students.

Religious socialization in the Asian American families. Little work has been done that considers whether or how different family factors that may influence religious socialization for white Christians will also be an important influence for non-white Christians and members of non-Christian religions. For instance, Asian-
American religions include Christianity (both Protestantism and Catholicism), as well as an assortment of other religions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam (Jasso, Massey, Rosenzweig, and Smith, 2003; Lien and Carnes, 2004).

Similar to non-Asian families, Asian parents are often the first source of religious influence. However, in a study on religious transmission in Asian families, Park and Ecklund (2007) found that Asian parents not only provided the means by which children received religious training by transporting them to a religious center in the neighborhood, they also provided a representational resource for religious commitment by their roles as leaders in religious communities. Acting as models of religious practice, parents became religious teachers and moral instructors to their Asian American children. According to the study, despite differences in the content, beliefs and practices across religions, the participants, regardless of religion, usually described their experiences with their parents in a similar manner.

1.3 Gender

Gender studies have become a branch of the social sciences. While the social sciences sometimes approach gender as a social construct, and gender studies particularly do, research in the natural sciences investigates whether biological differences in males and females influence the development of humans; both inform debate about how far biological differences influence the behaviour of person.

Gender is a range of characteristics of femininity and masculinity. Depending on the context, the term may refer to such concepts as sex (i.e. the state of being male or female), social roles (as in gender roles) or gender identity.
1.4 Home environment

1.4.1 Meaning

In the adolescent years the informal context of home environment provides a framework (whether smoothening or constraining) which structures behaviour, in different ways. The home environment, in which adolescents live, is not only a projection of family identity, but also an expression or physical translation of cultural believes, practices and behaviour.

A home is a place of residence or refuge and comfort. It is usually a place in which an individual or a family can rest and be able to store personal property. Most modern-day households contain sanitary facilities and a means of preparing food. Animals have their own homes as well, either living in the wild or in a domesticated environment. As an alternative to the definition of "home" as a physical locale, home may be perceived to have no physical definition--instead, home may relate instead to a mental or emotional state of refuge or comfort.

Home environment is the quality and quantity of the cognitive, emotional and social support that has been available to the child within the home and connotes the psychological environment of home. The total home environment refers to both positive and negative conditions which interact with each other, either favourably or unfavourably, to determine home environment to be 'better' or 'poor'.

Home environment refers to aspects of people’s domestic lives that contribute to their living conditions. These factors may be physical (poverty, psychological
conditions due to parenting; social circumstances (nest, living etc or wider cultural patterns of life related to the location (Suburban environments, Urban environments

1.4.2 The role of home or family in development

Home environment is the psychological climate of the family in the form of interpersonal relations attitudes and aptitudes, which influence one’s reactions to life to changing circumstances throughout life.

The home or family viewed as an environment that has a strategic role on child development, as described by Yusuf (2007: 105), as follows: (a) family is the first social group that became the center of the identification of the child, (b) family is the first environment to introduce value-value of life to the neighbourhood children, (c) parents and other family members is "a significant people " for the development of the child's personality, (d) family as an institution that facilitate the basic needs of the spiritual (human), both physical-biological, psychological and socio , (e) child spent much of his time in the home or family environment.

Family is the first social environment introduced to the child, or it can be said that a child was familiar with social relations first of all in the family environment. The existence of a single family member interaction with other family causes a child to realize about herself that function as individuals and as social beings. As an individual, he must fulfill all their needs in order to survive in this world. Meanwhile, as social beings, he adjust to life along the mutual-help and learn the customs prevailing in society. Thus, the development of a child in the family is largely determined by the condition of the family and the experiences that are owned by their parents so that, in the life of society we will find that the child's development with one another will vary.
Family environment serves as the foundation stone of the child's personality. Because the seeds of knowledge of children first getting in a family environment. Families also provide the basic skills of cognitive functions, social, emotional, religious and norms. Overall the family is the beginning of a decisive character and knowledge of children. As in the family, for children is something that is most likely to gain knowledge and experiences that are fundamental for children than other environments, such as social environment, schools and so forth. So the wise family environment is considered as prominent for children overall development.

George Peter Murdock and Syaripudin, (2006) suggested four family functions that are universal, namely:

- As an institution that justifies sex between adult men and women based on marriage.
- Developing descent.
- Implement the education.
- As an economic entity.

The role of the family (father and mother) as mentioned in these statements have a determine child development process of all its potential use as a means to an end his life.

Home environment has a strong influence on the children’s success, as the child has been provided a set of capabilities by the home or family environment in their daily life. M.I. Soelaiman (Syaripudin, 2006) mentions the role of family for the next child's life, as follows:
"Acquired the experience and treatment of children from their environment as a child - from her family - a kind of outline the pattern of life for the next life. Adler calls these lifestyle Leitlinie words, a kind of line that guides his life, which - consciously or unconsciously - attempted child to achieve it."

Observing from that implicit in these expressions, that the family environment has a very large role to the success of children in the future. Environment outlined the pattern of family life for the next child's life. So the family environment should be created in such a way that can support the growth of children well. Because after the family environment would be arrested children as life's closest and most real to the children in obtaining a variety of experiences. Family environment was one factor that is dominant in determining the child's future.

Intellectuals agree that the various conditions of the individuals in every stage of life are due to the effects of environmental factors. In other words, interruption of growth or offspring characteristics in a person, it is strongly influenced by environmental factors (Hujjati, 2003). Further disclosed that: "... in an effort to create literate generation, at least in the environment began to have a mass awareness in the collective contract isn't written ...” The definition here is as a form of collective consciousness in order to create a social environment that will contribute to each other in supporting development of children, with another expression of society least civilize ourselves with various activities that can display habits that can support the children develop in accordance with their development tasks. Piaget (Puckett 1996: 16-17) argues that many children through their interaction with the environment can adapt and add to the composition of the brain as the new information. Piaget believed that children's thinking develops according to the stages or periods-the period of the
growing complex. According to Piaget's stage theory, every individual will go through a series of qualitative changes that are invariant, always stay, no jumping or backward. Qualitative change is due to biological pressures to adjust to the environment as well as the organizing structure of thinking. To show the cognitive structure underlying patterns of organized behaviour, Piaget uses the term schema and adaptation. With both of these components means that cognition is a system that is always organized and adapted, allowing individuals to adapt to its environment. Schema (cognitive structure) is the process or how to organize and respond to various experiences. So the role of parents in this study is very important to create an environment that can provide a wealth of information, experiences (experiences). Because after what he observed the child will be recorded in brain structure, which will be developed qualitatively, the results of various observations of the various symbols. Soetjiningsih (1995) points out that Environment is a crucial factor in the achievement of the potential default. A pretty good environment will enable the achievement of potential default, while the unfavourable environment will discourage it. This environment is an environment "bio-psycho-social" that affects individuals every day, from conception until the end. However the family environment is the beginning of the life of the child, because child quantitatively and qualitatively has spent much of his time in a family environment. Surely the education process started since when people were born on earth. So the family role is very important to provide education on child treatment for all its potential to develop properly. When parents or family are unable to provide good experiences in the lives of children, then most likely potential of children do not develop properly.
1.4.3 Psychosocial Competence of Adolescents and Home environment

According to G. Stanley Hall (1904), Adolescence is a marvelous new birth, for the higher and more completely human traits are now born. Adolescence is a period of marked change in the person’s cognitive, physical, psychological and social development and in the individual’s relations with the people and institutions of the social world. Young adolescence is a period of change more rapid than at any other time in human development other than infancy.

For the adolescent, this period is a dramatic challenge, one requiring adjustment to changes in the self, in the family, and in the peer group and also in the institutions.

Among the various social groups, home occuipce the first and most important place for the development of the individual. Home is the person’s primary environment from the time he is born until the day he dies; hence its effect on the individual is also most significant and enduring.

Home environment is the most important institution for the existence and continuance of human life and the development of various personality traits. An ideal home environment is one where there is proper reward to strengthen the desired behaviour, a keen interest in and love for the child, provision of opportunities to express its views freely, where parents put less restrictions to discipline the child, not preventing the child from acting independently and not continuing infantile care, optimum use of physical and affective punishment, where the children are not compelled to act according to parental desires and expectations, where they are neither
threatened of being isolated from beloved persons nor deprived of love, respect and childcare.

1.5 Self-disclosure

The pervasiveness and importance of self-disclosure accounts for the intense interest in this phenomenon shown by social scientists. Self-disclosure is one of the defining characteristics of intimate relationships (Brehm, Miller, Perlman & Campbell, 2002): ‘Two people cannot be said to be intimate with each other if they do not share some personal, relatively confidential information with one another’ (p. 138). Self-disclosure serves important functions in relationship development. We cannot initiate, develop, or maintain a relationship without self-disclosure. We terminate relationships, in part, by terminating self-disclosure. As stated by Rubin, ‘In every sort of interpersonal relationship, the exchange of self-disclosure plays an important role’ (1973, p. 168)

Self-Disclosure is defined as the process whereby people verbally reveal themselves to others, constitutes an integral part of all relationships.

In General Self disclosure is an interaction between at least two individuals where one intends to deliberately divulge something personal to another. According to Jourard and Jaffee (1970), Self-disclosure is the act of revealing personal information to others. Sidney Jourard argued that openness in at least one significant relationship was a prerequisite for a healthy personality. Self-disclosure or wilful disclosures (Jourard1971) aims –“to let another person know with no shadow of a doubt what you have done, what you feel, etc.”
1.5.1 Types of disclosure:

Personal self-disclosure -Disclosure about oneself (I had a terrific day at work). It gives relationship partners —up to date‖ information about what each persons is thinking and feeling.

Relational self-disclosure -disclosure that focuses on one’s relationship with another person or interactions with others (I can’t imagine a better way to spend this holiday weekend than with you!). It also informs partners about the state of their relationship and how they are getting along. – Cf. Waring, 1987

1.5.2 Characteristics of Self Disclosure:

There are several characteristics of self-disclosure like It relates to the development of intimacy in human relationships as well as plays an important role in constructing what kind of relationship individuals have with each another (Harvey & Omarzu 1997). A child’s disclosure to his or her parents is related to the child’s perceptions of overall quality of family communication. Studies shows, greater disclosure in relationship shows greater involvement (emotional), liking, feeling of intimacy and relationship satisfaction. Fitzpatrick, 1987 reported that self-disclosure and openness as incompatible with asserting autonomy in their personal relationship. Self-disclosure, depending on a reaction of relationship partners, also plays an important role in validating self-worth and personal identity.

1.5.3 Facets of self-disclosure:

Omarzu, 2000 describes three facets of self-disclosure-
• Breadth (refers to the variety of topics a person willingly discloses to others. It can also refer to the various contexts people use to communicate—e.g. Internet, telephones).

• Duration (Duration is usually the amount of time people spend sharing personal information with others, however duration can often include the longevity of a relationship as well. Self-disclosure increases with the duration of a relationship).

• Intimacy (Intimacy in self-disclosure is the individual importance people place on the topics they discuss).

1.5.4 Functions of Self Disclosure:

Derlega, et al. (1993) indicated five functions: emotion expression, self-clarification, social-validation, relationship development and social control. Later on Ando (1990) added intimacy accommodation to these five functions, and divides the total of six functions into two categories:

• One is Personal function (emotion expression, self-clarification, and social-validation).

• And second is Interpersonal function (relationship development, social control, and intimacy accommodation)

1.5.5 Positive-Negative Sides of Self Disclosure:

Self-disclosure is significant in human relationships in a sense that the reciprocity nature enhances social intimacy in terms of creating relatedness, liking, and respect among people. Self-disclosure is also beneficial in interpersonal relationship in a way that it creates close relationship and maintains an individual’s psychological well-
being (Collins & Miller, 1994). Although self-disclosure is actively at in bringing people closer together, it can inflict tension resulting to social isolation as well. One study on disclosure of HIV status to one’s sexual partner, Parsons, Van Ora Gomez (2004) found both positive and negative consequences. Negative consequences included rejection, stigma, loss of intimacy, and threats to personal well-being.

1.5.6 Determinant of self-disclosure

- **Privacy**

Privacy is viewed as a process of boundary regulation, controlling how much (or how little) contact an individual maintains with others and adjustment of self-disclosure outputs and inputs is itself a boundary regulation. The extent of control one maintains over this exchange of information contributes to the amount of privacy one has in a social relationship. Reconceptualising self-disclosure as a form of boundary adjustment in the maintenance of privacy may provide a useful framework for integrating the self-disclosure literature.

- **Self esteem**

Another major determinant of self-disclosure is self-esteem (Sahlstein & Allen, 2002). Self-esteem is often measured by the number of positive or negative attributions people make about themselves (Rosenberg, 1965). Two major aspects of self-esteem are competence (is the degree to which people believe in their abilities) and worth (is the extent to which people consider themselves to be of value to others). High self-esteem individuals attribute positive events to skill whereas low self-esteem individuals attribute positive events to chance (Baumeister, 1993). Self-disclosure can
be affected by an individual's self-esteem (Dolgin, Meyer, & Schwartz, 1991; Sahlstein & Allen, 2002). A person low in self-esteem is not likely to be as self-disclosing as someone high in self-esteem because of the amount of interpersonal risk involved in disclosure. When people disclose their intimate thoughts and feelings, they become vulnerable to embarrassment and risk damaging their self-esteem (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Because high self-esteem people believe in their ability to communicate well, they are less restricted than are low self-esteem people from sharing personal information (Vera & Betz, 1992).

1.5.7 Consequences of self-disclosure

➢ Adolescents Family Life Satisfaction:

Adolescent family life satisfaction is defined as the extent to which adolescents perceive their families in a positive manner. Adolescent’s life satisfaction is strongly correlated with their self-disclosure. Adolescent who are more satisfied with his/her families engage in greater emotional disclosure with their parents and are more compliant with parental expectations and report greater quality of life. Greater emotional disclosure is linked to greater compliance with parental expectations and better quality of life.

➢ Trust:

Trust in itself is formed on level of certainty dependence and degree of accurate knowledge about other people in the relationship. Our friends, family members and spouses are trustable because with a fair degree of certainty and confidence we `know’
them- that is to say, we are aware of their accurate personal details and information. The general rule is that lower the level of uncertainty the more intimate is the relation.

- **Self-disclosure and Interpersonal relationships:**

The provision of intimate personal information is often linked to significant psychological or social consequences. Self-disclosure has long been recognized as essential in establishing and maintaining relationships. Research found that as people exchange intimate information about themselves, they develop stronger interpersonal links in both the real world (Fehr, 2004) as well as in they be space. Prior studies also found self disclosure as an important communication practice that facilitates personal growth (Jourard, 1971), relationship development (Fehr, 2004), group acceptance and social integration.

- **Emotional autonomy:**

Self - disclosure was negatively associated and secrecy was positively associated with emotional autonomy as assessed on Steinberg and Silverberg’s (1986) emotional autonomy measure.

**1.5.8 Disclosure and Health**

Research conclusively demonstrates that certain types of verbalisations about important life events produce positive health benefits. Exactly why and how these occur is unknown and of considerable interest to researchers.

Sidney Jourard (1959), an early and important advocate of self-disclosure research as well as practice, was perhaps the first social scientist to argue that disclosure of one’ sinner most thoughts and feelings would enhance psychological
well-being. However, the connection between disclosure and health was not studied systematically before James Pennebaker’s pioneering research almost 20 years later.

Pennebaker contends that the act of verbally encoding, by writing or speaking, one’s most traumatic life experiences alters the way those events are stored in memories resulting in improved physical and mental health (Pennebaker, 1997). In many experimental studies, Pennebaker and others have demonstrated that individuals who write or speak anonymously about their traumas, compared to individuals in control groups who describe mundane daily activities, show improved subjective well-being, declines in the use of health-care resources, and enhanced physiological markers of health (Pennebaker, 1997). These findings have been replicated not only in studies of college students, but also of university employees, unemployed workers, victims and others (Pennebaker, 1997), although Pennebaker’s predictions are not always supported (e.g. Kloss & Lisman, 2002). The potential importance of self-disclosure phenomenon has been recognised by scholars in a variety of fields. Consequently, there have been attempts to assess the utility of Pennebaker’s theory to address problems ranging from asthma and arthritis (Smyth, Stone, Hurewitz & Kaell, 1999) and sleeping disorders (Harvey & Farrell, 2003) to athletic performance (Scott, Robare, Raines, Knowinski, Chanin & Tolley, 2003). Some self-report studies, even one by Pennebaker (Pennebaker & O’Heeron, 1984), support the conclusion that naturally occurring self-disclosures of important concerns can positively affect mental health (Bolton, Glenn, Orsillo, Roemer & Litz, 2003).
1.6 Ego-strength

The idea of *ego-strength* has a long history in the field of psychology that can be traced back to the development of Sigmund Freud’s three-tiered view of personality in terms of id, ego, and super-ego.

Freud introduced the term ego to describe the part of the personality which emerged as a result of the individual's experience with reality. The ego was conceptualized as the organizing and planning part of the personality which attempted to mediate between inner needs and reality. Strength of ego was not stressed by Freud although he did state that, "An action by the ego is as it should be if it satisfies simultaneously the demands of the id, of the super-ego and of reality . . . [Freud, 1949, p. 3]."

Basic to a strong ego is the maintenance of a harmonious relationship between the components of the personality. "In the well-adjusted person, behavior simultaneously and successfully meets the demands of the id, the ego, and the super-ego [Kolb, 1968, p. 37]." Furthermore, the strong ego is able to achieve gratification independently of the instinctual and punitive parts of the personality; so that, "If we take an over-all picture of an individual ego, the degree of autonomy is correlated with what we call ego strength . . . [Hartmann, 1964, p. 218]."

Bibring (1937) stated that, "In fulfilling the often contradictory demands of id, super-ego and external world, a strong ego will predominantly obey its own aims and conditions [pp. 188-189]."

The individual who is not hampered by conflicting needs within his personality is able to utilize his energy and intellectual capacity in obtaining
satisfaction in the real world. Strength of ego becomes perceptible through behavior. Hartmann (1964) stated that, "We are used to judging the strength of the ego on the basis of its behavior in typical situations . . . [p. 139]." Bibring (1937) elaborated on a strong ego confronted with danger in contrast to a weak one as mobilizing "certain important functions, such as the function of perception, reality testing, critical judgement, etc. [p. 189]." Moreover, "Ego strength gives an individual a capacity to take the rebuffs of experience successfully without becoming submerged by them [Symonds, 1951, p. 131]." Further behaviours considered indicative of strong ego functioning included effective repression, capacity to react successfully to environmental stress, stability of adjustment, ability to carry out resolutions and genuine self-regard (Symonds, 1951). Essentially, ego strength is "effective personal functioning [Barron, 1953]."

1.6.1 Definition of Ego-strength

"Ego-strength" is a much used and useful term, though the concept is not easy to define.

In Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality, ego strength is the ability of the ego to effectively deal with the demands of the id, the superego and reality.

Ego-strength is the individual’s capacity to hold on to his own identity despite distress, turmoil and conflict between opposing internal forces as well as the demands of reality (Brown et al., 1979).

According to (Erikson, 1964, p. 115) ego Strength” refers to virtues through which “human beings steer themselves and others though life”
In general ego-strength is the ability to accept what is as existing and to then use our cognitive-behavioral, emotional and relational skills to deal with such.

1.6.2 Erik Erikson’s Approach

Erik Erikson’s (1963; 1964; 1968) psychosocial theory focused on the adaptive function of the ego and the development of ego strength. Erikson was an adherent to Freudian psychoanalysis and drew extensively on Freud’s insistence that psychological growth occurred through a long conflict-ridden process (Feist & Feist, 1999).

The ego in Erikson’s theory is defined as the person’s “capacity to unify his experiences and his actions in an adaptive manner” (Erikson, 1963, p. 16). A primary function of the ego is that it “forms the basic building blocks for identity and represents the means by which we become a human subject” (Minsky, 1998, p. 25). Ego is understood as a positive and adaptive force that plays a central role in establishing self-identity (Feist and Feist, 1999).

Erik Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development is one of the best-known theories of personality in psychology. Much like Sigmund Freud, Erikson believed that personality develops in a series of stages. Unlike Freud’s theory of psychosexual stages, Erikson’s theory describes the impact of social experience across the whole lifespan. From Eriksonian theory, ego strengths refer to the emergent values or outcomes that represent resolution of the eight psychosocial stages of development. Each stage in Erikson’s theory is concerned with becoming competent in an area of life. If the stage is handled well, the person will feel a sense of mastery, which he sometimes referred to as ego strength. If the stage is managed poorly, the person will emerge with a sense of inadequacy or low ego strength.
Theoretically, the ego strengths should provide evidence of successful psychosocial stage resolutions. Ego Strength” refers to virtues through which “human beings steer themselves and others through life” (Erikson, 1964, p. 115). In his psycho-socials age theory Erikson (1964) identified strengths as outcomes of successful stage resolutions. Like the psychosocial stages, the ego-strengths are thought to be sequential, invariant, and hierarchical.

Erikson adopted an epigenetic approach to human development that holds growth and development to be sequential and orderly, and that each aspect of development has a specific time of ascendancy during which maturational growth must take place (Erikson, 1963; 1980). His account is also cumulative, meaning that the successful solution of each stage is to a degree reliant on how well the previous stages were negotiated (Feist & Feist, 1999; Hook, 2002a). By maturing through and resolving the stages, the individual becomes increasingly autonomous and imbued with a wide and integrative set of life skills and abilities (Crain, 1992). While inadequate resolution of a stage will inhibit development, Erikson theorised that there are unavoidable moments of both progression toward growth as well as regression. Erikson has an optimistic theory of development, however, as he believed that each challenge could be overcome (Hook, 2002a).

1.6.3 Erikson’s eight stage theory of development

In Erikson’s theory, there are eight developmental crises that a person needs to negotiate in order for healthy development and strength of ego to occur (Roazen, 1976). These ego-strength are hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, care and wisdom. These stages in which ego-strengths are developed are as follows-
1. **Trust vs. mistrust**

Basic trust is the sense that others are dependable and will nurture and provide for you, as well as the sense that one is worthy of care, and inherently trustworthy. It is based in good, appropriate, responsive parenting. The baby is busy soaking up the stimulation available—food, sensory stimulation—and actively assimilates these experiences into a picture of self and the world. This is an interactive stage, as the baby tries to explore and get the parent to pay attention. If the world is not responsive to the baby’s needs, s/he develops a sense of mistrust. Some mistrust is useful, as complete naiveté or gullibility puts a person at risk. In a healthy resolution, there is more trust than mistrust however, allowing the person to connect with others and trust them.

Hope emerges from the successful resolution of trust vs. mistrust in infancy.

2. **Autonomy vs. shame, doubt**

During the second year of life the toddler develops a sense of autonomy and self-control, due in part to toilet training and motor development, walking and climbing. The psychological issue is broader, though, including the concepts of holding on and letting go. Adults that support toddlers’ exploration and protect them from their vulnerability build in a sense of personal control. Those who are over-protected or shamed by their experiences or parents’ discipline develop a sense of doubt in their efforts at independence. Autonomy should prevail in a healthy development, but some shame and doubt enable moral development and safety awareness.

Will emerges from autonomy versus shame/doubt.
3. Initiative vs. guilt

From 4 – 5 years old children learn what kind of person to be, based on identification with parents (Freud’s Oedipal complex and gender identity development) Children are interested in sexuality and sex differences and are developing a conscience (superego). They are curious and their explorations may be intrusive on others. Their play may reflect this curiosity. But the challenge is to develop some sense of initiative in exploring the world. If this curiosity is shamed, the child develops a sense of guilt.

Purpose results from successful resolution of initiative versus guilt in early childhood.

4. Industry vs. inferiority

School develops a sense of industry, learning to win recognition from producing things. Without a healthy development of this skill, the child develops feelings of inferiority. Teachers and coaches are vital in encouraging persistence on task and valuing the products of children.

Competence emerges from industry versus inferiority during latency;

5. Identity vs. identity diffusion

During adolescence, the teen tries to develop a separate sense of identity from parents and others. Ego identity is the awareness of one’s own individuality, as well as continuity in one’s meaning for others. The question is “Who am I?” Personal identity will develop past identifying with role models, as the teen must develop his/her life story, encompassing his values.

Identity confusion happens if a teen can’t develop a coherent sense of identity.
Negative Identity develops if a teen develops an identity based on negative role models, criminals, slackers, etc. This is particularly a risk if juvenile delinquents are housed with hardened criminals to better learn the criminal lifestyle and value.

Identity foreclosure occurs if a teen chooses an identity commitment too quickly without independent thought.

Moratorium is the period in adolescence when teens actively explore all the career and values possibilities. It makes commitment to a values system more meaningful.

Fidelity emerges from identity versus identity confusion in adolescence. Fidelity, the ability to commit to a loyalty promised. This does not only apply to marriage, but various areas of adult personal responsibility.

6. Intimacy vs. isolation

Erikson believed that until identity is firmly established, it is not possible to develop true psychological intimacy with another person. Once identity is set, though, it is possible to choose fusion with another without fear of loss of self.

Distantiation is a term Erikson used as the counterpart to intimacy- the willingness to isolate from others or destroy any who seem dangerous to one’s self. These people often remain isolated and self-absorbed, even if they go through a number of relationships on the surface (Donald Trump comes to mind.) Marriage may resolve this crisis, but it doesn’t necessarily. People can also develop intimacy with others than spouse. love emerges from intimacy versus isolation in young adulthood.
7. **Generativity vs. self-absorption**

Generativity is the interest in establishing and guiding the next generation. These people mentor youth, train others at work, develop social institutions that benefit others, as well as develop tolerance for others who hold different ideas. It may simply be expressed in parenting, but does not require becoming a parent to develop.

Stagnation is the negative resolution of this stage, with the person not able to be involved in caring for another.

Care emerges from generativity versus stagnation in middle adulthood.

8. **Integrity vs. despair**

Old age is about making sense of one’s life. To develop integrity means you feel your life has been meaningful and you don’t feel regrets about your life choices. Despair is the experience of regret, blame, and feeling fear and resistance to the process of death. Wisdom emerges from integrity versus despair in later adulthood.

The notion of a crisis implies that normal development does not proceed smoothly, but rather that the ego can only develop through resolving a series of conflicts (Newman & Newman, 1997). While there are certain points in the life cycle where particular crises will be more significant than others, all the crises are present throughout the person’s life (Erikson, 1963). Importantly for Erikson, these conflicts are determined by the individual’s society and culture (Roazen, 1976). However, while these social challenges coincide with a particular aspect of physiological development, they are more correctly understood as emotional conflicts (Hook, 2002a, original emphasis).
If successfully negotiated, the conflicts will result in the attainment of particular ego strengths, which can be understood as prime adaptive qualities that lead to an increased sense of internal strength and coherence in healthy individuals (Markstrom, et al., 1997; Newman & Newman, 1997). If a crisis is not successfully negotiated, the antipathy of that ego strength will occur, and will be counterproductive to development. However, while a high level of the antipathy will create a lower degree of ego strength, some degree of antipathy is necessary for survival, as both positive and negative encounters together contribute to the total range of a person’s adaptive capacities (Newman & Newman, 1997).